



TO: SUNY Cortland Faculty Senate

FROM: Dr. Eric Edlund
Chair, Educational Policy Committee

DATE: March 22, 2022

RE: Evaluation of the possibility of a course reset policy for current students

Charge

On October 11, 2019, the former Chair of the Faculty Senate, Maggie DiVita, charged the EPC with evaluating a course reset policy for current students.

Motivation

The motivation for such a policy comes from the recognition that some students may be hindered in their degree progress because of a cumulative GPA that is below 2.0. Such a situation may arise, for example, when a student has changed majors and has no other reason to retake courses with low grades in their prior major. It can even be the case that students who have changed majors may be prohibited from retaking courses due to enrollment restrictions. A policy that would exempt students from a limited set of courses in their GPA calculations could enable students in such situations to successfully complete their degree.

Current status

A first step in the direction of a general policy was the creation and implementation of a course reset policy for students who have left the College and have been readmitted. In these cases, students work closely with one of the Associate Deans to create a plan for readmittance.

Findings

After multiple discussions with the Associate Deans and representatives of the Registrar's Office, it has been concluded that a course reset policy for current students is not feasible at this time. There are two primary reasons why this is so. First, the workload required of the Associate Deans to manage these cases is very large for the few students who are readmitted to the College. Scaling such a program to the entire student body would be simply unsustainable without a large investment in additional administrative resources. Second, there are substantial barriers within the SUNY system to implementing such a plan. State and federal laws mandate how GPAs must be calculated for financial aid. The GPA used for these purposes should match that which is used for degree conferral and included on official transcripts. Therefore, a College-wide course reset policy may place us in an untenable position between law and our desire to help students. This interpretation has been verified by SUNY administration.

The EPC is looking into alternative paths for providing students with opportunities to improve their GPA consistent with policies.